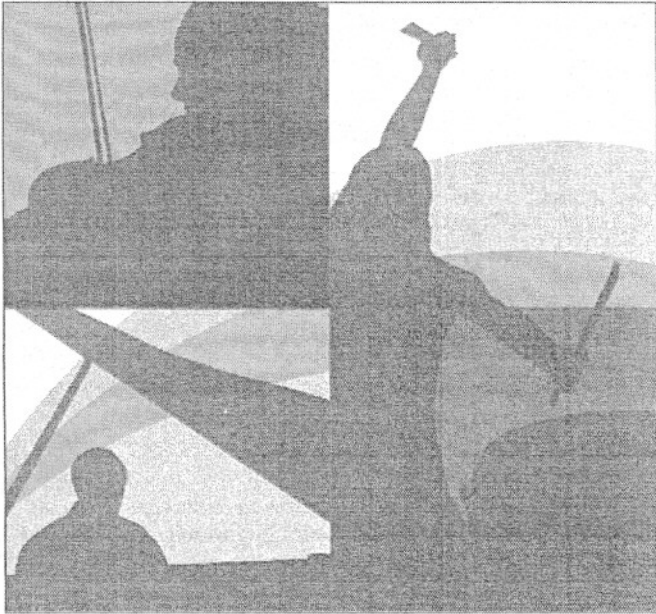


CD 2008--46

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF MUSIC



2007-2008 SEASON



WHERE GREAT MINDS MEET GREAT MUSIC

20-800450  
Sunday, April 13, 2008  
7:30 pm. Walter Hall

## *Hitting the Classics*

### **University of Toronto - Percussion Ensemble II**

Greg Samek, director

#### **PROGRAM**

Music for Pieces of Wood

Steve Reich

Only Human Dance Collective

Veronica Gershenzon, Shakir Haq, Toni Largo, Casey Scott-Songin

Congo Square

Kalabash

Arr. Justin Han

Super Mario Bros. Medley

Koji Kondo

Arr. Ben Duinker

Head Talk

Mark Ford

#### **INTERMISSION**

Three Movements for Solo Percussion

Murray Houllif

Michelle Hwu; Solo Percussion

Gainsborough

Tom Gauger

#### **Ensemble Members**

Jennifer Collins, Dorian Cox, Justin Han, Michelle Hwu, Stefan Kitai

## Program Notes

**Music for Pieces of Wood** is an excellent example of how very basic musical elements can be combined to create an interesting composition. The claves used in the piece are tuned to specific pitches, yet once the piece has started the tuned claves fade into the background. The concept of the piece can easily be understood by imagining a kaleidoscope. First, a pattern is established. What follows are rhythmic shifts in the music that are comparable to the slight shift of a kaleidoscope. There are 58 shifts of rhythmic pattern in this piece, and three large sections that comprise the overall form. Each section employs additional rhythmic density that is bound together by the constant quarter note click set by the first clave player.

- Stefan Katia

**Congo Square** is a bright, grooving Latin jazz piece by the Toronto-based Latin jazz group, Kalabash. Kalabash's unique sound is in no small part due to both a woodwind and a steel pan player at the front of the band, as well as a large array of auxiliary percussion and a superbly tight, grooving rhythm section. This piece was chosen to be transcribed for the ensemble due mostly to its catchy melody and its breezy yet energetic groove.

- Justin Han

**Super Mario Bros.** is a game developed by Nintendo in the mid 1980's. It is a landmark console game because it featured smooth-scrolling levels. In *Super Mario Bros.*, Italian plumber Mario, aided by his brother Luigi, must save Princess Peach of the Mushroom Kingdom from the evil Bowser. The musical score for *Super Mario Bros* was composed by Japanese composer, Koji Kondo. Koji Kondo has been working for Nintendo composing video game music since the early 1980's. He faced several challenges such as a limit of four instruments because of the limitations of the system's sound chip. His songs are certainly memorable; the title theme song to *Super Mario Bros.* retains its iconic status two decades after its initial release.

- Jennifer Collins

Mark Ford's **Head Talk** provides the percussion quintet with a dose of sophisticated comic relief. The equipment necessary is somewhat unusual: six used drum heads--ranging in size from a 10" to a 22"; a used 14" snare head; two bongo heads; one 14" coated head; two Pinstripe heads; and five performer-prepared papered-heads for the ending. The five performers explore and develop various sounds and grooves throughout the piece while having adding a bit of humor and theatrical tricks during the course of the piece.

- Greg Samek

Murray Houllif is a percussionist as well as an eclectic composer, having won two Percussive Arts Society Composition contests in past years. **Movements for Multi-Percussionist and Percussion Quartet** is one of his many compositions that won the PAS Composition contest in 1978. The first movement features a calm yet mysterious vibraphone solo, contrasted by the second movement, which is a lively and busy multi-percussion solo. The tempos and time signatures in both movements are constantly changing, making it a demanding piece for a percussion ensemble. *Movements for Multi-Percussionist and Percussion Quartet* is a piece with compelling subtlety that requires attention to fully realize the true intent of the piece.

- Michelle Hwu

Tom Gauger's composition **Gainsborough** for percussion quintet has been a popular choice in percussion literature ever since its publication. Gauger has been a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra since 1963 and works as an educator at Boston University and at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. Gauger has worked with renowned conductors including Leonard Bernstein and has recorded for numerous soundtracks such as *Saving Private Ryan* and *Schindler's List*. He describes Gainsborough as a melodic piece with a jazz influence that is enjoyable piece for both performer and audience.

- Dorian Cox

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